

No Movie On Short Grass Area Compete Without Love Scene

By Monte Noelke

5-26-66

Page 5

MERTZON — At last my plans to make a movie on shortgrass country are showing some signs of progress.

In case you don't remember this project, now six or eight months old, it was founded on the desire to depict the human misery suffered by inhabitants of this often treacherous land. A second consideration was my wish to receive a check from the intended audience, namely the USDA, in hopes that by increasing my economic station above that of my fellow rancher I could comment on the local livestock industry in a more objective manner.

After one heartbreaking delay after another, the script has been completely revised to include a modern love scene. The cast has been altered by adding one female actress, and the approach is as direct as a teenager's path to nickelodeon.

The title has also been changed but is not yet definite. It will be either "Love on the Spring Creek Watershed" or "Blossoming Love on a Spreader Dam."

Here is the new script:

Scene one: A narrator is heard in the background. In a deep voice filled with emotion, he heads: "This is one of the last outposts of the rapidly vanishing grassland stockmen. It marks the end of this noble breed of men and women, whose stoutness of heart, except in their weakest moments, exceeds the spirit of the pioneers. This is the region that inspired a famous poetess to write, 'Forlorn, forlorn, forsooth and alas/ This land of little money and very short grass,/ It tears my heart through here to pass,/ Ne'er ever again a country so bright and sunny, Forlorn, forlorn, forsooth and alas...'"

As the narrator's voice fades, the lights are raised and a lady can be seen sitting at a table, pasting in trading stamps. In a chair close by, a rancher is seated, gazing sadly into the fire. The lady stops and admires her work. The man moves restlessly and frequently brushes dust and cottonseed meal out of his hair. Obviously this is a love-filled domestic scene on a Texas ranch.

Wife: "I only lack 30 pages to have a full book. Then I can pick up a set of plastic pickle pick impalers."

Husband (mumbling): Fifty-five cents a pound, and it costs more to shear them hair creatures every time. Maybe only 48 cents, and the news filled with the wonders of synthetics. Oh, my tortured soul, and the interest rate up half a percent. Of all the dad-blasted things in tarnation, of all the John Brown extravagance there is on this earth — what in the name of mankind is a pickle pick impaler?"

Wife: "For your benefit, dear tiller of rocky soil, a pickle pick impaler is what the nice city folks have to eat their pickles on. And in case you are interested, my honeybun of the cocklebur-and-empty-dream set, everybody that is anybody has several dozen of them about the house."

Husband (falling back into his reverie): "Taxes, lease payment, REA bills and heaven knows what else. Light calves too light. Heavy calves too heavy. The whole world is going to hell on a racing sled."

Wife (ignoring his mumbling): "Our daughter is getting might serious over the new Conservation Service man. Oh, my, those government men are genteel folks. They remind me of the people back home..."

Husband: "That girl isn't ready to wear lipstick, much less go with the boys."

Wife: "She's 23 years old, and you know it."

Husband: "She is not. She hit the ground the year calves brought a quarter and lambs were hard to move at 14 cents. And furthermore no —" The scene closes before he can finish what was planned to be a long lecture on the wisdom of marrying a government employee.

Now all I need on do is polish the script up a bit and send the first draft to the Department. I do hope it is their policy to advance money prior to completion, as it would be mighty nice to be able to portray these ranch folk without actually sharing their plight.